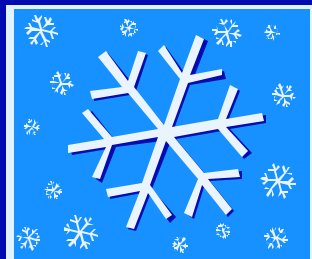


Winter 2001



A PUBLICATION OF THE SC STATE BUDGET & CONTROL BOARD
OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES, STATE FLEET MANAGEMENT

Focus on Fleet

From the State Fleet Manager

In this, our first issue of 2001, let me start by saying I hope all of you had a restful, relaxing holiday season.

Heck, who am I kidding?

We rush around, dashing from store to store to find just the right presents for the people closest to us. Somebody snags a parking place we thought was ours. The traffic is unbearable: one night it took me fifteen minutes to get from the mall exit to the main road — a distance of about a quarter mile. People were distinctly impatient, to put it mildly. There was much honking of horns, and I

could tell the people in the vehicles around me were seething.

Fortunately, I took my own advice from the last issue of *Focus on Fleet* and did not a) make a rude gesture; b) shout socially unacceptable epithets; or c) brandish a firearm. I waited my turn, and, while I wasn't particularly happy about waiting, I was patient.

In this issue of *Focus on Fleet* we are pleased to begin a new series of profiles of Fleet Managers in state government. In this issue we interview Jan Smoak, Fleet Manager for the Department of Health and En-

vironmental Control (DHEC). Jan is a native Columbian, and he has served DHEC for many years.

Also in this issue, you'll see an exciting story about the State's trial of a new recyclable oil filter. State Fleet Management and the Department of Public Safety have joined this venture together with a local South Carolina company.

Whatever happens,
...y'all be safe out there!

—Gerald W. Calk
State Fleet Manager

DHEC announces plans for E85 Fuel Station

Plans to open an E85 fuel station were announced by Jan Smoak, DHEC Fleet Manager, at the December 6th Meeting of the Central Midlands Clean Cities Coalition and Centralina/Catawba Clean Fuels Coalition. The station will be located with their present fuel facility at 2600 Bull Street in Columbia. Plans include the conversion of the existing 10,000 gallon unleaded fuel tank to Ethanol, and the installation of a new 20,000 gallon tank to supply unleaded fuel. DHEC plans to make access available to Local, State, and Federal agencies. State agencies will be able to use their Wright

Express fuel card to charge purchases at the DHEC location; however, billing for fuel used at this location will originate from DHEC.

E85 is the term for motor fuel blends of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. Ethanol blended fuel burns cleaner than regular gasoline reducing the level of harmful hydrocarbon and benzene emissions. Many of the State's new Ford Taurus sedans are capable of operating on E85. Refer to your owners manual to see if your vehicle can operate on E85. For more information about this new station or about Alternative Fueled Vehicles, contact Jeff McCormack at 803-737-1504.

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Fleet Manager Profiles

Introducing Jan Smoak, DHEC Fleet Manager

This is the first in a series of profiles of South Carolina governmental Fleet Managers.

Jan Smoak settles in behind his desk at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. He is surrounded by stacks of work, but everything is in a neat and orderly condition. He has agreed to be the first to talk with us for our series on Fleet Managers, and today he is ready for the inquisition.

Jan is a native of Columbia, South Carolina, and he is married to the former Rebecca Vinson. They have two daughters and three granddaughters; the grandchildren keep Jan far too busy for any hobbies other than yard work. Still, he manages to find time to sing in his church choir and in the Columbia Lutheran Bach Choir.

Over the years, Jan has completed a number of management courses, including the University of South Carolina's Academy in State Management.

In 1989, Jan had been a manager with Farm Credit Banks for over 20 years. That year, the company downsized, and Jan retired. At the time, he was Director of Support Services. Shortly thereafter, he began working for the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), where he has been ever since.

The last ten years he has served as DHEC's Fleet Manager. At DHEC he oversees a fleet of some 700 vehicles, some owned and some leased. DHEC has one of the State's busiest fleets: of the agency's 7,000 employees, about 6,300 have occasion to drive a state vehicle.

During Jan's tenure at DHEC he has won a number of awards, including the 1999 Bill Nix Award, presented by the South Carolina Governmental Fleet Managers' Association (SCGFMA) at their annual conference. This award is given for excellence in fleet management.

Among Jan's proudest accomplishments, although he is careful to deflect any credit to the programmer, is the creation of DHEC's automated fleet management system. Richard Lipkin did the technical work on the system according to input from Jan and from other fleet professionals. DHEC offers this Windows-based software at no cost to any governmental entity that wishes to use it. For this endeavor, Jan received the SCGFMA President's Award in 1999 and the DHEC Bureau of Business Management's Team of the Year award.

The development of the Vehicle Management System is a perfect example of Jan's management style. Although Jan supervised the creation of the system from inception to fruition, he is eager to share the credit with other members of his team. "Managers have to listen to their people," he says. "The team has a lot of input in decision-making."

To promote the exchange of information, Jan believes governmental managers should meet at least quarterly, even if only for a day. He feels that the SCGFMA is underutilized as a resource

for the sharing of experience. (Note: if you would like more information on the SCGFMA, contact Jan directly at 803-898-3514.)

The DHEC Maintenance Facility was one of only three shops to receive an Outstanding rating from State Fleet Management in FY 2000. In a further distinction for Jan, DHEC also received the Best Fleet Safety Program award from SFM for FY 2000. In order to make constant improvement in the area of safety, DHEC has certified one of its employees to teach defensive driving courses.

On the front page of *Focus on Fleet*, you may have noticed a story about the new E85 (85% ethanol, 15% gasoline) fueling station at DHEC. Jan is proud of this achievement because it represents another positive step in DHEC's mission to prevent further damage to the environment and to reduce American dependence on foreign oil. Jan announced these plans at the Central Midlands Clean Cities Coalition and Centralina/Catawba Clean Fuels Coalition. DHEC is excited

(continued on page 3)



State Fleet Goes Green: Recyclable Oil Filters Tested

According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's 1998 Used Oil Recycling Annual Report, only 22% of used oil filters were recycled in 1998. This left over 11.5 million filters retaining approximately 724,180 gallons of used oil that ended up in South Carolina landfills, contaminating soil and groundwater sources, taking up valuable space, and wasting natural resources. In today's society there has to be a better option!

The State of South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Office of General Services, State Fleet Management (SFM) Section and the Department Of Public Safety are aware of this problem and are taking steps to protect the environment. On behalf of these two agencies, SFM has entered into an agreement with Die-Tec Corporation, a South Carolina company, to test a renewable oil filter. This state of the art oil filter can be cleaned and reused. The renewable oil filter reclaims 100% of used oil and is designed never to see a landfill. The filters are leased, not sold, as a part of a service that Die-Tec offers which includes renewing used filters. Through this unique process we can conserve valuable landfill space, reduce oil contamination,

and help to preserve natural and financial resources.

State Fleet Management is currently testing the filter on nine Ford Crown Victorias owned by the Department of Public Safety and operated under the harshest conditions: they are driven in the line of duty by State Troopers. The maintenance of these vehicles is provided at Frasier Tire Company here in Columbia, SC through the SFM Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP). The CVRP has hundreds of commercial vendors statewide, many of whom provide Preventive Maintenance (PM) services, including oil changes. Ten other vehicles are currently being tested through the SFM Central Transportation Maintenance Facility located in Columbia.

If the test proves successful, leadership at State Fleet Management plans to use this filter in as many applications as possible throughout the State. State Fleet Management currently supports about 6,000 vehicles through the Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP) and the Central Transportation Maintenance Facility.

—Bill Page, Maintenance Team Leader

Fleet Manager Profiles

Introducing Jan Smoak

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to be leading the charge towards alternative fuel use, having already purchased about 50 E85 compatible vehicles.

As Jan looks towards the future, he says the Next Big Thing is the possibility of installing GIS (Global Information System) equipment in DHEC vehicles to help plan work routes more efficiently. Better planning would also help to reduce fuel costs. Jan also sees a few other things coming down the road. For instance, he believes federal law may be changed to withhold highway funds if States cannot prove that they use a certain percentage of alternative fuels. He also believes a tax incentive would help promote a market for AFVs, since they can be cost-prohibitive for the average family.

On the personal side, Jan sees retirement within three to five years. We asked him to share a humorous story or two with us, but he prefers to focus on educating drivers to treat fleet cars as their own. "After all," he says, "if they abuse the vehicle, it's their own tax money they're wasting."

—Margie Valladares

Safety Observances for 2001

State Fleet Management supports the traffic-related **National Safety Council's** safety observances and would like you to be aware of their upcoming dates. Future issues of Focus on Fleet will provide additional information about these observances.

National Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week

February 11-17, 2001

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Tina Foley, Public Affairs – 202-366-9550

National Safety Council

Carole Guzzetta, 202-293-2270 x 466

National Buckle Up America Week

May 21-28, 2001

National Safety Belt Coalition

National Safety Council

National Safety Council

Carole Guzzetta, 202-293-2270 x 466

State Fleet Supports MADD

As in years past, State Fleet Management supported MADD's **Red Ribbon Campaign** this year. SFM sent out 8,650 Red Ribbons to tie on their vehicles' antennae or other visible location as a sign of their commitment not to drink and drive. The campaign began on 23 November and ended on 1 January 2001. State Fleet is grateful to all those who supported this campaign with us. We encourage you to make safe, sober driving your number one New Year's resolution. For additional information regarding MADD, contact:

MADD SC

2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 116

Columbia, SC 29204

800-543-6693 or 803-748-7333

What'll I Do?

How to Cope with Fuel Card Authorization Problems

There seems to be some confusion about what to do if you have an authorization problem with your Wright Express Card. Here are some steps you can take to make sure your fuel is paid for and avoid the need for reimbursements. There are usually only three possible reasons why you would have an authorization problem:

- The station does not accept the Wright Express Card.
- The PIN number you have entered is incorrect.
- The card is damaged.

If you need to refuel your State vehicle, the first thing you should do is make sure the station accepts the Wright Express card. **Do not assume** the station accepts the card. The gray and red logo should be visible on the pump or at the entrance to the station. If you don't see the logo, ask the attendant **before** you pump any fuel.

When you enter your PIN, make sure you enter a **six-digit number**. Your PIN number should always begin with a 7 and conclude with the last five digits of your Social Security Number.

If you get an error message when you enter your PIN, take these steps immediately:

- Call the toll-free number on the back of the WEX card. This number will put you in touch with Wright Express Customer Service, available 24 hours a day.
- If you don't receive authorization for the purchase using the WEX toll-free number, you can reach PS Energy Customer Service between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM at 1-800-334-7548.
- If you still need assistance, you can reach Rob Malpass at State Fleet Management at 803-737-1611.

It is important to handle all authorization problems immediately in order to prevent the problem from happening again. If for some reason you are unable to report an authorization problem right away, please report it at your earliest convenience to your Agency Fuel Card Coordinator or to State Fleet Management.

—Rob Malpass



Mr. Harvey Swinton receives the 45-year Safe Driver award from Gerry Calk of SFM. At right is Mrs. Aramethia Swinton.

Unspotted Record

45 Years of Safe Driving

In a previous edition of *Focus on Fleet*, we made mention of some State employees who had received awards for their years of safe driving, including several who had received 20-year or 30-year pins. The most striking award, however, was presented to a SCDOT employee who had racked up an amazing 45 years without an accident! That employee is none other than Harvey Swinton, Sr., Trades Specialist IV with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT).

Mr. Swinton was born in Jasper County, South Carolina, on 12 July 1934 to Mrs. Janie S. Swinton, still alive and well at the age of a hundred and one. He has been married to the former Aramethia Green for 45 years, and the couple have seven children. Mr. Swinton is a deacon at Oak Grove Baptist Church, where he also serves on many committees and boards.

Mr. Swinton began his career with the Highway Department on 5 December 1951 as a Probationary Laborer at a pay rate of 65 cents an hour. On 1 June 1952 he was promoted to regular status and given a five-cent raise.

He moved through the ranks until he reached the level of Senior Highway Maintenance Foreman on 10 March 1991.

He has served the Department in every job title in the Highway Maintenance Worker category, and has performed every imaginable job duty, from the construction of new roads and bridges to mowing the medians with a Model A Tractor and sickle mower. He also assisted the Department in the construction of the first ferry dock for traffic to and from Hilton Head Island. He says the most interesting thing about his long career is seeing the changes in the ways roads are built and maintained.

At a ceremony held on 5 December 2000 (his forty-ninth anniversary with DOT), Mr. Swinton received not only the 45-year Safe Driving Pin from State Fleet Management, but two other awards from the Department of Transportation in recognition of his long and dedicated service to the Department. The ceremony was attended by Mrs. Swinton and their daughter Stephanie Swinton. Mr. Bobby Clair, DEA of District 6, Ron Tvorik and Gerry Calk of State Fleet Management, and Michael Sponhour of the Budget and Control Board also attended the ceremony.

State Fleet Management extends its congratulations and felicitations to Mr. Swinton for his achievements.

—The DOT contributed to this report.

You Be the Judge: Is this Real or Fake?



This story has appeared on several websites, including *Popular Woodworking*, and I have vetted it as thoroughly as I can. The story appears to be real, as do the photographs. Here is the text as presented on a hoax-checking website at <http://128.242.205.65/spoons/photos/lumber.htm>

Lumbering Along

The stupidity of some people in this world never fails to amaze me. This [above] picture is real — not doctored in any way — and was taken last week in Waldorf, MD by a Transportation Supervisor for a company that delivers building materials for 84 Lumber. When he saw it there in the parking lot of IHOP, he went and bought a camera to take pictures. The car is still running as can be witnessed by the exhaust.

A woman is either asleep or otherwise out in the front seat passenger side. The guy driving it was over jogging up and down on Rt. 925 in the background. The witnesses said their physical state was OTHER than normal and the police just shook their heads in amazement. The driver finally came back after the police were there and was getting down at the back to cut the twine around the load. They told him to get back until it was taken off.

The materials were loaded at Home Depot. The Home Depot store manager made the customer sign a waiver before loading. Both back tires are trashed. The back shocks were driven up through the floorboard. On the roof are many 2X4s, 4X4s and

OSL sheets of lumber. The load isn't all that meets the eye either. In the back seat were ten 80-pound bags of concrete! They estimated the load weight at 3000 lbs. The car is a VW Jetta with FL plates and the guy said he was headed for Annapolis!

Origins: Real or faked? We got plenty of mail from readers giving scientific reasons why this photo had to have been faked, and lots of tips from digital photo “experts” pointing out how this photo had obviously been fabricated. Judge for yourself.



Know Your Limit

Changes in CVRP Purchase Order Procedures

Purchase Order Procedures

When the CVRP receives a request for a Purchase Order, the CVRP technician assigns a repair code and an amount to cover the normal cost for each task he authorizes. Sometimes the vendor does not know immediately what repairs are needed. In such cases, the CVRP technician assigns a value of one dollar pending notification from the vendor as to the extent of the repairs. The CVRP technician also gives the customer a PO number and amount and tells him where to take the vehicle. It is possible that some CVRP technicians have not stressed that they were giving an approval amount rather than a wild guess.

Changes

The CVRP has recently implemented a new procedure for assigning a purchase order for any repair or service authorized. We now assign the Purchase Order number and give additional instructions regarding the authorized amount to the person who calls in for the PO. After issuing the PO, CVRP personnel have been instructed to give the following statement **verbatim**:

“Please tell the vendor that I have approved this PO for only (amount) and ask him to write this amount on the work order immediately.”

Drivers **should not sign** the work order until the approved amount is shown on the work order.

Reasons for the Change

We have made this change because some invoices have come in that were markedly different from the amounts we had author-

ized in advance. When we asked the vendors about these discrepancies, some vendors have told us they never received a specific authorization amount, but were asked to fix this or that and told to call SFM when the work was finished.

We are also aware of instances where the driver or the transportation coordinator asked for an authorization amount, but the driver asked for additional work to be done when the vehicle was handed over to the vendor. While it makes sense to have any additional work done while the vehicle is already in the shop, we have to know up front so we can assign the proper amount for the PO.

Therefore, in order to save your agency money, CVRP technicians need your help and the help of all agency personnel to ensure that vendors get the word not to exceed the approved amount and not to perform any additional repairs without prior approval from State Fleet Management's CVRP.

We are making these changes in order to improve our service to our customers. If you call the toll-free number for a purchase order and the technician does not follow the procedures we have described here, please call the State Fleet Management Contracts Manager, Mr. Bob Amburgey, at (803) 737-6398. Please tell Mr. Amburgey the name of the CVRP technician who issued the PO.

We appreciate your participation in the CVRP, and we thank you for your assistance in this matter.

—Bill Page, SFM Maintenance Team Leader

Staff News

SFM Welcomes New Team Members

Since our last edition of *Focus on Fleet*, State Fleet Management has welcomed several new staff members on our Operations, Maintenance and Program Support Teams.

Marie Orris, a new member of the Program Support Team, comes to SFM after 15 years as a Teacher's Assistant in Lexington County School District Two.

Brenda Smith, the Program Support Team's new Information Resources Coordinator, was formerly employed by Carolina Construction.

The CVRP welcomes **Douglas McClam**, a new Procurement Specialist. Doug has over six years' experience as manager of an Auto Zone auto parts center. He also has experience in the automotive repair industry.

The Operations Team welcomes **Dean Henry**. Dean started with State Fleet Management on 18 December. He comes to us from a position in the transportation division of the South Carolina Department of Social Services. Dean will serve as State Fleet's new Vehicle Inspector, and his time will be divided between the SFM Receiving Lot and the State Fleet main office on Senate Street.



Defensive Driving Classes

Now is the time for agencies to determine whether their employees need the required eight-hour Defensive Driving Course, known as the DDC-8, or the four-hour refresher class, the DDC-4. Agencies should assign a high priority to ensuring that employees obtain necessary driving skills and certifications. As it is written in the South Carolina State Fleet Safety Program,

New employees whose State positions require them to be Routine Drivers will attend the full 8-session driver training course within 90 days of date of employment and must attend the 4-session refresher course every third year thereafter... Employees who are permanently assigned a State-owned vehicle must attend the full 8-session driver training course within 90 days of the date of such vehicle assignment and must attend the 4-session refresher course every third year thereafter, as long as the employee is permanently assigned the vehicle.

If you would like to schedule training, or if you have any questions about Defensive Driving Training, contact Ron Tvorik at (803) 737-1602.

—Ron Tvorik

Driver License Screening

As stated in the South Carolina State Fleet Safety Program,

Agencies will establish procedures to annually screen the Motor Vehicle Records of all employees, contractors, consultants, and temporary or volunteer workers who have occasion to drive State vehicles.

As a courtesy to the agencies we serve, we have always provided a semi-annual driver license screening at a minimal cost, only slightly higher than the price the Department of Public Safety charged us. These fees have remained the same for over two years.

In December, however, the Department of Public Safety informed us, along with all other state agencies, that the fee for a three-year or ten-year MVR would increase to \$10.00 per record. Needless to say, this was a bit of a shock, and we have heard from many of you that you would be unable to comply with the screening requirement because of the price increase.

State Fleet Management (SFM) sent a letter offering notification of price increases for the sale of driver and vehicle information to your agency last month. The letter detailed how services offered by SFM were affected, and offered new prices for Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Screening services. Since that time, the Department of Public Safety, Division of Motor Vehicles has issued changes to the original rate increase that **reduces** the price increase previously announced which is charged for MVR screening. Accordingly, SFM has revised its rates based upon those changes. The new prices for these services are listed below, and in the enclosed Fleet Safety Services brochure. **Please note that the administrative processing portion of the fee charged by SFM has not increased.**

Semi-annual "batch" Automated Screening \$6.75/MVR
Individual MVR Screening..... \$8.50/MVR

Semi-annual "batch" automated screening service is offered once every six months for Agencies that have numerous drivers. Agencies that send a list of their drivers and corresponding license information on electronic media can have those records screened for any activity during the previous twelve months. **If no activity is detected, there is no charge.** If any activity is found, a printed record will be produced and a charge levied.

The following instances will cause a printed record to be generated:

- A moving violation is recorded.
- Any involvement in an accident (no matter who is at fault).
- A suspension of driving privileges.

Individual MVR screening is offered to agencies needing less than 100 records screened on an *as requested* basis. The requests are usually filled within one day from date received.

State Fleet Management has requested that any future price increases for services provided by the Division of Motor Vehicles be provided well in advance to allow agencies an opportunity to budget for those items. Again, we regret any inconvenience this may cause your agency. Please contact Ron Tvorik at (803) 737-1602 if you have any questions concerning driver screening.

—Gerry Calk



New SCEMIS Users

State Fleet Management is happy to welcome several new client agencies for our South Carolina Equipment Management Information System (SCEMIS). These new agencies are:

- South Carolina Commission for the Blind
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Mental Health

We congratulate the transportation coordinators for these agencies and wish them much success using our system.

New and Improved

At the request of several State Agencies, State Fleet Management is currently developing the Other Equipment Module for SCEMIS. This module should be available in a limited capacity by the end of February 2001. The final product rollout will depend on the results of testing.

If you or your agency would be interested in aiding State Fleet and the Department of Mental Health in the testing of our new Other Equipment Module, contact Jonathan Eason at 803-737-1239 or by e-mail at jeason@ogs.state.sc.us.

Correction

In the Fall 2000 edition of *Focus on Fleet* we stated that it was **William O. Boykin**, Deputy State Forester, who had received the State Fleet Safety Award on behalf of the Forestry Commission. In fact, it was Regional Coastal Forester **Cecil Campbell** who received the award, along with Equipment Section Chief **Charlie Jones**.

Don't forget to check out our website at <http://www.ogs.state.sc.us/statefleet/OGS-SF-index.phtm>. From this page, you can find all of our regulatory functions, including vehicle replacement and use criteria, as well as our weekly fuel price updates. Contact Jonathan Eason at 803-737-1239 if you have suggestions or comments.

Odds and Ends

Amusing Anecdotes Sought

If you enjoyed the picture and story about the lumber on top of the Volkswagen in this issue, we would certainly welcome any stories you might have, preferably with some documentation, such as a photograph. If you wish to submit them anonymously, we can always gray out the license tag numbers or other identifying information on the vehicles.

If you would like to submit a story and/or a photograph, please contact Jonathan Eason at (803) 737-1239 or via email at jeason@ogs.state.sc.us. We would love to hear from you.

Mileage Reimbursement Rate Changes

The Internal Revenue Service has announced that the standard business mileage rate will increase from 32.5 cents to 34.5 cents per mile effective 1 January 2001. The General Appropriations Act provides for mileage reimbursements at this rate for employees who use their personal vehicles to conduct State business.

However, please remember that the General Appropriations Act also specifies that if you use your personal vehicle even though a motor pool vehicle is available, you will be reimbursed at a rate four cents lower than the standard rate — that is, 30.5 cents per mile, effective 1 January. If you have any questions, contact your agency transportation coordinator.

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